

### Remarks

In the Office Action mailed October 25, 2005, the Examiner objected to claims 6 and 8 because the term "rod" lacks antecedent basis; rejected claims 1-5 and 7-8 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. Re. 31,298 ("Herbenar"); and indicated that claim 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

#### **1. Amendments to the Abstract**

Applicant has amended the abstract to clarify that the link is assembled to the support by a stud.

#### **2. Amendments to the Claims**

Applicant has amended claims 6 and 8 to correct a typographical error. As the examiner suggested, the term "rod" has been replaced with the term "shank." Claim 9 has been added.

#### **3. Herbenar Fails to Disclose That the Fixing Shank Prevents The Inner Strength Member from Rotating Relative to the Support**

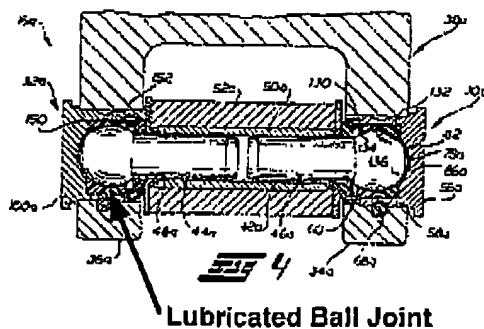
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), an anticipating reference must teach each and every element recited in a claim. Because Herbenar fails to teach every element recited in any of the claims, it cannot serve as an anticipating reference.

Each independent claim recites a "fixing shank" that is configured to "prevent the inner strength member from rotating relative to the support." Herbenar fails to disclose this limitation, and, in fact, Herbenar teaches quite the opposite. In Herbenar, a lubricated ball joint allows the support to rotate relative to its "inner member"

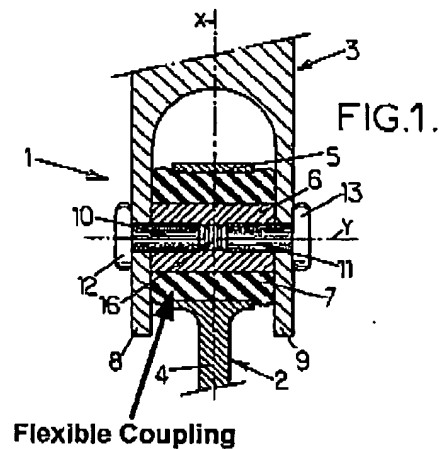
(cylindrical sleeve 50a).

By way of example, this distinction between Herbenar and the Present Application is highlighted in a comparison of figures of the two documents. In Herbenar, the lubricated ball joint allows the inner member (50a) to rotate relative to the support (36a). On the other hand, in the present application, the fixing shank (12) holds the inner member (6) in place, the sleeve (5) can then rotate relative to the inner member (6) by means of the flexible coupling (7).<sup>1</sup>

**Herbenar Fig. 4**



**Application Fig. 1**



Herbenar does not anticipate the claims because Herbenar fails to teach the fixing shank that prevents the inner strength member from rotating relative to the support.

<sup>1</sup> Applicant would remind the Examiner that Figure 1 of the Application is merely an example embodiment of the claimed invention, and that the scope of the invention is defined by the language claims.

#### 4. Conclusion

Because the limitations of independent claims 1, 4, and 9 are not taught by the cited reference, Applicant respectfully asserts that those claims are patentably distinct. In view of these remarks and the corresponding amendments, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claims 1-9 and a speedy allowance.

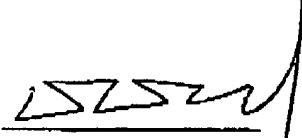
Respectfully submitted,

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3/23/06

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